

ELLA FITZGERALD

the johnny mercer songbook



TOO MARVELOUS FOR WORDS
EARLY AUTUMN
DAY IN-DAY OUT
LAURA
THIS TIME THE DREAM'S ON ME
SKYLARK
SINGLE 'O
SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE
TRAV'LIN' LIGHT
MIDNIGHT SUN
DREAM
I REMEMBER YOU
WHEN A WOMAN LOVES A MAN

Verve Great
American
Songbooks™

ARRANGED AND CONDUCTED BY NELSON RIDDLE

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2. EARLY AUTUMN
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10. MIDNIGHT SUN
11. DREAM
12. I REMEMBER YOU
13. WHEN A WOMAN LOVES A MAN



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ELLA FITZGERALD: THE JOHNNY MERCER SONGBOOK

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1. **TOO MARVELOUS FOR WORDS** 2:27
(Johnny Mercer-Richard Whiting)
2. **EARLY AUTUMN** 3:47
(Johnny Mercer-Ralph Burns-Woody Herman)
3. **DAY IN-DAY OUT** 2:42
(Johnny Mercer-Rube Bloom)
4. **LAURA** 3:39
(Johnny Mercer-David Raksin)
5. **THIS TIME THE DREAM'S ON ME** 2:51
(Johnny Mercer-Harold Arlen)
6. **SKYLARK** 3:07
(Johnny Mercer-Hoagy Carmichael)
7. **SINGLE 'O** 3:15
(Johnny Mercer-Donald Kahn)
8. **SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE** 2:30
(Johnny Mercer)
9. **TRAV'LIN' LIGHT** 3:47
(Johnny Mercer-Jimmy Mundy-Trummy Young)
10. **MIDNIGHT SUN** 4:50
(Johnny Mercer-Lionel Hampton-Sonny Burke)
11. **DREAM** 2:55
(Johnny Mercer)
12. **I REMEMBER YOU** 3:34
(Johnny Mercer-Victor Schertzinger)
13. **WHEN A WOMAN LOVES A MAN** 3:47
(Johnny Mercer-Gordon Jenkins-Bernie Hanighen)

Ella Fitzgerald, vocals.

Arranged and conducted by Nelson Riddle. Orchestra includes Buddy DeFranco, clarinet; Willie Smith, alto sax; Plas Johnson, tenor sax; Frank Flynn, vibes; Paul Smith, piano, and others.

Recorded October 19-21, 1964 at Universal Recorders in Los Angeles.

Original sessions produced by Norman Granz. Produced for reissue by Richard Seidel. Original sessions engineered by Val Valentin. Digitally Remastered by: Dennis Drake, Polygram Studios.

Design: Tom Hughes/Jeff Faville, Hughesgroup. Cover photo by Ray Ross

All selections previously released on Verve V6-4067.

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THE great lyricists did more than fit words to music; they enhanced the vernacular of the day and gave moment to what seemed to be commonplace. They understood the beauty of everyday language, which is one reason their best songs suffused the national consciousness so deeply and quickly. Good lyrics are not poetry, but they may be poetic. If they are potent enough, words can demystify the abstractions of melody, and influence the way melody is interpreted. Lester Young wasn't the only instrumentalist who insisted on learning the words before playing the music.

Johnny Mercer was the most versatile of lyricists — homespun and sophisticated, romantic and comical,

naive and daring. He was thoroughly and brilliantly conversant with the American language. Consider how many simple yet unforgettable phrases he made part of our speech, including "accentuate the positive," "my mama done tole me," "one for my baby and one more for the road," "sitting in the noonday sun," and "my huckleberry friend." Maybe that's why Alec Wilder wrote of him, "He made me feel like a patriot." A list of his songs (*Our Huckleberry Friend* is a highly recommended anthology of them) encompasses dozens of standards, and a who's who of great melodists. A key to Mercer's remarkable diversity was his refusal to tie himself down with one collaborator. He found the right words for Harold Arlen, Harry Warren, Richard Whiting,

Jerome Kern, Walter Donaldson, Rube Bloom, Henry Mancini, Jimmy Van Heusen, Hoagy Carmichael, Gene De Paul, and numerous others. And he was a versatile tunesmith, too, as witness, "Harlem Butterfly," "Dream," "Something's Gotta Give," "I'm an Old Cowhand," and "I Wanna Be Around."

Ella Fitzgerald's 1964 tribute to Mercer was her eighth songbook and the first devoted to the work of a lyricist. [Other Ella songbooks on Verve include: Cole Porter (VE2-2511), Rodgers & Hart (VE2-2519), George Gershwin (VE2-2525 and 2615 063), Duke Ellington, Vols. 1 and 2 (VE2-2535 and VE2-2540), Harold Arlen (817 526-1), and volumes of Irving Berlin and Jerome Kern still to be reissued.] She was in high spirits,

singing somewhat more fancifully than was her custom for this series. Nelson Riddle conducted a crack studio band and his own arrangements; unfortunately, a complete personnel breakdown of the musicians does not exist.

Too Marvelous for Words. This was one of several hugely successful songs ("Hooray for Hollywood" is another) written by Richard Whiting, whose daughter, Margaret, Mercer later produced on his own record label, Capitol. Ruby Keeler and Lee Dixon introduced it dancing on a giant typewriter in the 1937 movie, *Ready, Willing and Able*. Among the many notable recordings are those by Bing Crosby, Chu Berry, and Stan Getz.

Early Autumn. Ralph Burns's

melody was written for Woody Herman, as the fourth movement of "Summer Sequence." Herman's 1949 recording made a star of Stan Getz, but although Mercer managed to work up a lyric as exquisitely imagistic as the tune, it has been neglected by singers. Willie Smith is the altoist.

Day In-Day Out. Rube Bloom's 1939 melody inspired a vivid lyric, including a phrase — "come rain, come shine" — that would eventually earn a Mercer song of its own. Lena Horne and Frank Sinatra have made this a showstopper. Note how Ella swings the opening phrases in contrast to the rhythmically drab setting.

Laura. David Raksin's theme from the 1944 movie of the same name was an unlikely hit, since it's

so difficult to sing. Mercer's lyric perfectly captures Laura's evanescence, and facilitated hits for Sinatra and Stan Kenton, and a parody by Spike Jones. Riddle's arrangement is especially imaginative.

This Time the Dream's on Me.

The team of Mercer and Arlen was rarely equalled — perhaps only by the Gershwin brothers and Rodgers and Hart. For other samples, see Ella's extensive homage to Arlen. This song was introduced in the 1941 movie, *Blues In the Night*, and was buried by the title selection, although Gene Krupa, Woody Herman, Artie Shaw, and Glenn Miller each had a go at it. Fitzgerald and Riddle are inspired.

Skylark. Hoagy Carmichael's classic 1942 melody, with its ingeni-

ous release, was originally conceived for a Broadway version of *Young Man With a Horn* that was never produced. Anita O'Day sang it with Krupa; of the many great recordings that followed, those by Sinatra, Sonny Rollins, and Ella are especially fine.

Single'O. Written with Donald Kahn, probably in the early-60s, this is the least known song on the album. The arrangement features Frank Flynn's vibes.

Something's Gotta Give. Mercer's song had the functional purpose of explaining Fred Astaire's infatuation with the much younger Leslie Caron in the 1955 movie, *Daddy Long Legs*. Years later, Joanne Woodward stripped to it in *The Stripper*. Ella and Riddle have a good time with it, rivalling the version

by Sinatra and Billy May; they are abetted by tenor saxophonist Plas Johnson.

Trav'lin' Light. Written in 1943 with trombonist Trummy Young and arranger Jimmy Mundy, this song is closely associated with Billie Holiday, who recorded the definitive version with Paul Whiteman's orchestra. Others, who've tackled it, usually in tribute to her, are the Delta Rhythm Boys, Anita O'Day, and Johnny Griffin.

Midnight Sun. Mercer said he wrote this in his head while listening to the original 1947 version by its co-composer, Lionel Hampton, on the car radio. It includes a classic triple rhyme: chalice/palace/borealis. After Mercer added words in 1954, Jo Stafford made a lovely recording with

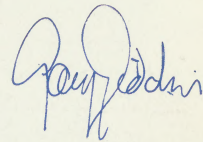
all-star accompaniment. Frank Flynn's vibes evoke Hampton.

Dream. Mercer wrote this one himself, in 1944, when he and orchestra leader Paul Weston starred on the Chesterfield Show. The Pied Pipers and Lee Castle were among the first to record it; more creative versions were cut by Dinah Washington and Ella, who sings the highly relevant but frequently forgotten verse. Buddy de Franco plays a clarinet solo.

I Remember You. For the 1942 musical *The Fleet's In*, Mercer collaborated with the gifted composer-scenarist-film director Victor Schertzinger, whose last score it was. They wrote "Tangerine," "Arthur Murray Taught Me Dancing In a Hurry," and the present song, impeccably realized by Ella,

which remains a favorite of jazz musicians from George Shearing to Betty Carter.

When A Woman Loves A Man. This enduring torch song from 1934 boasts a tune by Bernie Hanighen (whose Mercer melodies include "Bob White") and the composer-arranger Gordon Jenkins. Recorded first in England, Billie Holiday made it famous. It turns out to also be ideal for the Fitzgerald imprimatur.



Gary Giddins is the author of *Riding On A Blue Note* and the forthcoming *Rhythm-a-ning* (Oxford, 1985).



Das Compact Disc Digital Audio System

bietet die bestmögliche Klangwiedergabe – auf einem kleinen, handlichen Tragwiederger.

Die überlegene Eigenschaft der Compact Disc beruht auf der Kombination von Laser-Abtastung und digitaler Wiedergabe. Die von der Compact Disc gebotene Qualität ist somit unabhängig von dem technischen Verfahren, das bei der Aufnahme eingesetzt wurde. Auf der Rückseite der Verpackung kennzeichnet ein Code aus drei Buchstaben die Technik, die bei den drei Stationen Aufnahme, Schnitt/Abmischung und Überspielung zum Einsatz gekommen ist:

DDD Digitales Tonbandgerät bei der Aufnahme, bei Schnitt und/oder Abmischung, bei der Überspielung.

ADD Analoges Tonbandgerät bei der Aufnahme; digitales Tonbandgerät bei Schnitt und/oder Abmischung und bei der Überspielung.

AAD Analoges Tonbandgerät bei der Aufnahme und bei Schnitt und/oder Abmischung; digitales Tonbandgerät bei der Überspielung.

Die Compact Disc sollte mit der gleichen Sorgfalt gelagert und behandelt werden wie die konventionelle Langspielplatte. Eine Reinigung erbringt sich, wenn die Compact Disc nur am Rande angefaßt und nach dem Abspielen sofort wieder in die Spezialverpackung zurückgelegt wird. Sollte die Compact Disc Spuren von Fingerabdrücken, Staub oder Schmutz aufweisen, ist sie mit einem sauberen, fusselfreien, weichen und trockenen Tuch (geradlinig von der Mitte zum Rand) zu reinigen. Bitte keine Lösungs- oder Scheuermittel verwenden! Bei Beachtung dieser Hinweise wird die Compact Disc ihre Qualität dauerhaft bewahren.

The Compact Disc Digital Audio System

offers the best possible sound reproduction – on a small, convenient sound-carrier unit.

The Compact Disc's superior performance is the result of laser-optical scanning combined with digital playback, and is independent of the technology used in making the original recording.

This recording technology is identified on the back cover by a three-letter code:

DDD Digital tape recorder used during session recording, mixing and/or editing, and mastering (transcription).

ADD Analogue tape recorder used during session recording; digital tape recorder used during subsequent mixing and/or editing and during mastering (transcription).

AAD Analogue tape recorder used during session recording and subsequent mixing and/or editing; digital tape recorder used during mastering (transcription).

In storing and handling the Compact Disc, you should apply the same care as with conventional records.

No further cleaning will be necessary if the Compact Disc is always held by the edges and is replaced in its case directly after playing. Should the Compact Disc become soiled by fingerprints, dust or dirt, it can be wiped (always in a straight line, from centre to edge) with a clean and lint-free, soft, dry cloth. No solvent or abrasive cleaner should ever be used on the disc.

If you follow these suggestions, the Compact Disc will provide a lifetime of pure listening enjoyment.

Le système Compact Disc Digital Audio

permet la meilleure reproduction sonore possible à partir d'un support de son de format réduit et pratique.

Les remarquables performances du Compact Disc sont le résultat de la combinaison unique du système numérique et de la lecture laser optique, indépendamment des différentes techniques appliquées lors de l'enregistrement. Ces techniques sont identifiées au verso de la couverture par un code à trois lettres:

DDD Utilisation d'un magnétophone numérique pendant les séances d'enregistrement, le mixage et/ou le montage et la gravure.

ADD Utilisation d'un magnétophone analogique pendant les séances d'enregistrement, utilisation d'un magnétophone numérique pendant le mixage et/ou le montage et la gravure.

AAD Utilisation d'un magnétophone analogique pendant les séances d'enregistrement et le mixage et/ou le montage, utilisation d'un magnétophone numérique pendant la gravure.

Pour obtenir les meilleurs résultats, est indispensable d'apporter le même soin dans le rangement et la manipulation du Compact Disc qu'avec le disque microsilicon.

Il n'est pas nécessaire d'effectuer de nettoyage particulier si le disque est toujours tenu par les bords et est remplacé directement dans son boîtier après l'écoute. Si le Compact Disc porte des traces d'empreintes digitales, de poussière ou autres, il peut être essuyé, toujours en ligne droite, du centre vers les bords, avec un chiffon propre, doux et sec qui ne s'effiloche pas. Tout produit nettoyant, solvant ou abrasif doit être pros crit. Si ces instructions sont respectées, le Compact Disc vous donnera une parfaite et durable restitution sonore.

Il sistema audio-digitale del Compact Disc

offre la migliore riproduzione del suono su un piccolo e comodo supporto. La superiore qualità del Compact Disc è il risultato della scansione con l'ottica laser, combinata con la riproduzione digitale ed è indipendente dalla tecnica di registrazione utilizzata in origine.

Questa tecnica di registrazione è identificata sul retro della confezione da un codice di tre lettere:

DDD Si riferisce all'uso del registratore digitale durante le sedute di registrazione, mixing e/o editing, e masterizzazione.

ADD Sta ad indicare l'uso del registratore analogico durante le sedute di registrazione, e del registratore digitale per il successivo mixing e/o editing e per la masterizzazione.

AAD Riguarda l'uso del registratore analogico durante le sedute di registrazione e per il successivo mixing e/o editing, e del registratore digitale per la masterizzazione.

Per una migliore conservazione, nel trattamento del Compact Disc, è opportuno usare la stessa cura riservata ai dischi tradizionali.

Non sarà necessaria nessuna ulteriore pulizia, se il Compact Disc verrà sempre preso per il bordo e rimesso subito nella sua custodia dopo l'ascolto. Se il Compact Disc dovesse sporcarsi con impronte digitali, polvere o sporizia in genere, potrà essere pulito con un panno asciutto, pulito, soffice e senza sfiliacitura, sempre dal centro al bordo, in linea retta. Nessun solvente o pulitore abrasivo deve essere mai usato sul disco.

Seguendo questi consigli, il Compact Disc fornirà, per la durata di una vita, il godimento del puro ascolto.

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A Man 3:47

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